

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 30, 31 and 33 have been cancelled; the specification and claims 27 and 46 have been amended. Claims 27-29, 32 and 34-55 are pending and under consideration.

Claims 27, 29-35, 38, 39, 42, 44-49 and 52 are rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 5,291,066 to Neugebauer et al. It should be noted that the Examiner indicates US 4,349,408 refers to Neugebauer et al. However, this citation is incorrect.

Referring to FIG. 1a of the reference, Neugebauer et al. discloses a moisture-resistant electrical circuit having a substrate 10. A cavity 11 is formed in the substrate 10. A plurality of integrated circuit chips 12 are formed on the substrate 10 in the cavity 11. Spaces 16 are provided between the chips 12. Metal interconnection pads 14 are provided on the chips 12. Sections A and B together form an electrical interconnection structure 9. In section A, a pair of protective films 18, 20 have via holes 25 formed therein. The via holes 25 are aligned with the interconnection pads 14. A metal layer 24 is formed over the protective films 18 and 20.

Each of the independent claims has been amended to recite that the insulating layer is formed from at least first and second partial insulating layers having openings with different widths such that a stepped structure is formed from the contact surface to the first partial insulating layer and from the first partial insulating layer to the second partial insulating layer, the lateral surface being formed as part of the stepped structure. Somewhat similar language was previously found in cancelled claims 30, 31 and 33. Antecedent support for the amended claims can be found, for example, in Figure 4 and paragraph [0045] of the application.

Neugebauer et al. does not in anywhere suggest the stepped structure now claimed. With regard to cancelled claim 31, perhaps the Examiner thought the gap 25 shown in FIG. 1a or 1b of Neugebauer et al. corresponded to the claimed stepped structure. However, it is believed the new claim language clearly shows this interpretation of the reference is not appropriate.

Claims 28, 36, 37, 40, 41, 43, 50, 51, 53-55 are rejected as being obvious over Neugebauer et al. in view of additional references. However, none of these additional references compensate for the deficiencies discussed above with regard to Neugebauer et al.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the prior art rejections should be withdrawn. There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted the application is condition. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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